

REMARKS

Claims 1-4, 6-8, 17, 20, and 22 have been rejected under 35 USC § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent 5,062,421 to Burns et al. (Burns). Applicants respectfully submit that this rejection cannot be sustained.

Burns describes a respiratory mask that has a soft compliant face piece 12 and a rigid insert 20. The rigid insert 20 has four notches 27, each of which receives a locking tab 29 that projects from a filter cartridge 28. The notches 27 and tab 29 permit a filter cartridge 28 to be snapped into place and prevent it from rotating — see column 4, lines 56-63.

Applicants invention requires at least one bayonet attachment system that comprises first and second portions where the first portion is attached to the second portion with a connection that is incapable of being inadvertently separated. Burns does not teach or suggest the use of a bayonet attachment system. Applicants have defined a bayonet attachment system to "include elements other than mainly threads such that the two portions are attached by inserting one portion at least partially within the other portion and **rotating one portion relative to the other** so that the two portions can be joined without multiple turns." The Burns attachment system uses notches and a locking tab that allows the cartridge to be snapped into place. The notch/tab system of engagement operates without any rotational movement. The Burns system thus is not a bayonet attachment system. As such, Burns does not anticipate applicants' invention.

Claims 5, 10-13, 21, and 23-37 have been rejected under 35 USC § 103 as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent 5,062,421 to Burns et al. (Burns). Applicants respectfully submit that this rejection cannot be sustained for the reasons presented above. As indicated, Burns fails to teach or suggest the use of a bayonet attachment system. Without any teaching or suggestion, this basic feature of applicants' invention, Burns would not have rendered applicants' invention obvious to a person of ordinary skill.

Respectfully submitted,

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